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ABSTRACT

This retrospective picture of college students over the past 30 years reflects what has been written about students in "Change" magazine between 1969 and 1999. Using the analogy of a museum gallery, the student portraits are grouped into five eras; each of which dominated the literature for approximately 10 years. The Gallery of Student Protest, portraying the late 1960s through the 1970s, is shown as a time of student unrest, discontent, activism, and radicalism, and the portraits reveal idealism, rebellion, and confusion. Portraits in the Gallery of Open Admissions are of students who gained admission to higher education despite poor school performance and are often confused with those in the next gallery, the Gallery of Diversity. However, most of the portraits in the Gallery of Open Admissions are of white students--the children of blue collar workers--while those in the Gallery of Diversity are of students of color. The Gallery of Lifelong Learning portrays students once labeled nontraditional, but now called adult, part-time learners, and they reflect new patterns in the design and delivery of higher education. The fifth gallery has portraits of Students as Consumers, comparison shoppers looking for the options that best serve their needs. (Contains 30 references.) (SM)

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PORTRAITS OF STUDENTS (1969-1999): A RETROSPECTIVE*

K. Patricia Cross

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PORTRAITS OF STUDENTS (1969-1999): A RETROSPECTIVE*

K. Patricia Cross

This speech arose out of an invitation to review some 60 articles about students published in Change Magazine between 1969 and 1999. The enormous task of collecting and classifying the articles was accomplished by Deborah Dezure, and I express my sincere appreciation to her for doing the hard work of this review, leaving the fun for me. I had the pleasure of reading articles, written by leading commentators of their era, about times of which I was a part. It was, for me, a trip through history viewed through the perspective of 30 years of change in higher education. I was, in turn, amused, surprised, and occasionally discomfited by what I read. I came away with the conclusion that people caught in the process of change often see things differently from those who look back on change after it has been accomplished.

Presenting an overview of what has been written about students over the past 30 years is, in many ways, like mounting a retrospective of paintings. The task of a docent leading a tour through the galleries of student portraiture is necessarily limited. Impressions are shaped by what the artist/author intended to convey, by what the curator/editor chose to display, and by what the docent/reviewer selects as representative or interesting to talk about. Please join me this morning on a brief docent's tour of the galleries of student portraiture as revealed in the pages of Change Magazine from 1969-1999

As in art retrospectives, there are schools of style and messages in the portraits of students over the 30 years of this exhibit. I have identified five galleries of portraits, each gallery representing a different era. Like art galleries, there is overlap, and debates might be launched over the labeling and delineation of any set of student portraits, but I found it amazing that, with few exceptions, each gallery represents less than ten years of dominance in the literature. The first gallery contains portraits from

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the 1960s and early '70s. It contains pictures with heavy restless movement and vivid swirling colors. The era represented is variously described as the time of student unrest, discontent, activism, and radicalism. The portraits reveal idealism, rebellion, and confusion. The second gallery is the Gallery of Open Admissions. It pictures students who gained admission to higher education despite poor past performance in school. The portraits in this gallery are often confused with those in the next gallery--the Gallery of Diversity. And in some ways they share some things in common, but the two contain rather different portraits of students. In the Open Admissions Gallery are pictures of mostly white students who are the sons and daughters of blue-collar workers; the Gallery of Diversity presents a distinctive focus on students of color. The Gallery of Lifelong Learning is next on our tour. Once labeled non-traditional students, adult part-time learners created new patterns in the design and delivery of higher education. And finally in the fifth gallery are the portraits of "Students as Consumers," who are comparison shopping to find the options that best serve their needs.

Gallery of Student Protest

Let us begin the tour in the Gallery of Student Protest. In retrospect, we tend to look upon the years of student unrest with something between admiration and nostalgia. But the artists of the time painted something rather different. Bruno Bettleheim, a distinguished professor at the University of Chicago, was alarmed. He found striking "similarities between the present student rebellion in this country and what happened in the German universities to spearhead Hitler's rise to power. Politically," he wrote, "the German rebels embraced the extreme right, while the dissenters embrace the extreme left, but what is parallel is the determination to bring down the establishment." (1969, p. 18).

While Bettleheim's analysis seems extreme to us today, his dark and angry mood is reflected in the work of even such esteemed artists as Fred Hechinger, long-time education editor of the New York Times. Hechinger found "Academic freedom

on the American campus . . .as embattled today as at any time in the present century, including the McCarthy era" (1970, p. 32). "It is embattled," he wrote, " not only by the hostility of the repressive right-wing throughout the country, but also by the coercive and occasionally violent radicalism within academia." (p. 33). "When left-wing professors and right -wing trustees -- brothers under the skin -- reward students and teachers, not for academic accomplishment but for political orthodoxy, Left or Right, then the exercise of free expression becomes a matter of martyrdom. This is hardly an environment in which academic freedom can flourish" (p. 35).

But Hechinger also posed an interesting analysis that foreshadowed a concern that has resurfaced in recent years -- namely, the neglect of undergraduate teaching. In a 1969 article entitled, *Student Targets: Professors Are Next*, he sympathized with the students, but, he said, they are "squandering their ammunition" on the wrong targets. "Their much-publicized villain," he wrote, " is the university administration -- symbol of repression, the picture of a powerful autocratic force, hostile to change and roadblock to a new, activist, and relevant curriculum," Actually, said Hechinger, it is the professors who form the more appropriate targets -- and the more certain path to reform. "Spasms of autocracy on the part of administrations," he said, "more often than not result from frustration over a lack of real and effective power. Their edicts-- infuriating as they often are to students -- generally concern peripheral issues, such as who may demonstrate when and where, and how late girls may stay in men's dormitories. (It is a tribute to how much the times have changed to re-read the language of the day -- girls staying in mens dormitories, indeed?) "Such controversies may be aggravating," Hechinger went on, "but they are hardly fundamental. They are not the stuff of revolution. . . . it is only a question of time," he wrote, "before students . . will sense that most of their grievances can be resolved only by the faculty that is responsible for the conditions to which the students object." (p., 37)

In the interest of full disclosure, I should reveal that my interest in Hechinger's directing student protesters to a faculty target may be colored by the fact that I was an administrator in the early 1960's -- a sitting, albeit reluctant, target as Dean of

Students at Cornell University. Had I had time to read the *New York Times* instead of the *Cornell Daily Sun* I am certain that I would have welcomed Hechinger's redirecting students to a new and more appropriate target! But by the time the student rebellion broke out in full force, I had made a wise career move, and was safely ensconced behind a clip board at Berkeley as a researcher studying the student protest movement, instead of an administrator trying to control it!

Hechinger's insight regarding the pressures for effective reform was only partially accurate as it turns out. It appears today that professors are the targets, all right, but it is legislators, not students, who are gunning for them. Michael Rossman, one of the student leaders jailed for his part in the Berkeley uprising, would not be surprised at this outcome. He concluded in his book on the student movement that if students wanted "leverage to transform education, inside-the-system wasn't where to stand to get it."

By 1972, Andrew Greeley was able to proclaim that, "The word is out that the Movement has had it.. . . At best," he said, "it was a splendid display of energy, enthusiasm, altruism, and commitment . . . at worst, the Movement was simplistic, self-righteous, naive, romantic, and inept" (1972, p. 19).

So, did the student protest movement accomplish anything at all? Did it leave any lasting legacy? There is no simple answer to that question, but it is sufficiently tempting that several Change authors attempted an answer. Warren Bryan Martin was the most positive and optimistic of the analysts. For his answer, he distinguished between the student movement and the counterculture. The student movement, under the banner of "Do not fold, spindle, or mutilate, " agitated for "respect, good teaching, free speech, and an opportunity to participate in the formulation of policies that influenced their education as well as their personal lives." (1982, p. 36). The counterculture, in contrast, had a socio-political agenda, and according to Martin, "with no sense of history and no sense of proportion moved into the turmoil created by the educational reform movement with radical plans for the reorganization of all of society." (p. 36) In Martin's reflections, from the vantage point of 1982, the counterculture ultimately drowned out the student

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movement, but he credits the student movement with sparking higher education's receptivity to a variety of innovations that provided new options and greater flexibility in university policies and procedures -- options that according to Martin, were "slowly incorporated into the majority of American colleges and universities."

The general consensus of the authors published in Change, however, was that the student protest movement did not change higher education in any substantial way -- at least not directly -- but it did change students and their experiences. It left an imprint of greater openness and a lowering of barriers between social classes, said Roy Niblett (1973). And, claims one author, it started the sexual revolution in this country. Richard Taylor claimed that the changes in sexual mores began at Berkeley in 1965 when students learned to ask the question, Why not?

> "It had no rational answer," wrote Taylor. "Soon after [the student demonstrations] students on several campuses demanded that dormitory rooms be accessible for visits to persons of either sex. Why not? And then that men and women, so choosing, be permitted to live in the same dormitories. Why not? And then that they be permitted to live on the same floors of those dormitories . . . and so on." (Taylor, 1981)

But for the most part, a period of quiet reined after the protests -- a period that Benjamin DeMott characterized as "deeply boring, academic peace." (quoted in Martin, 1982, p. 35) Roy Niblett, a professor from the University of London, spent several months in the early '70s visiting campuses in the United States and confessed that he was "puzzled by the quietism pervading the student scene -- a mood of apparent withdrawal from passion, politics, participation" (Niblett, 1973) p. 63. Harvard sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset agreed, noting that, "The country and the campus were tired of protest and intense politicization." (Lipset, 1974) p. 57. And George Bonham, founder and editor of Change, claimed that "For all the student debates over the nature of academic reform, the practical involvement by students in campus reform movements remains little more than marginal.. . . they know that their

main goal is not to reform their campuses, but to graduate and get out" (Bonham, 1972, p. 15)

Most analysts of the time seemed as tired and disillusioned as the students. Some reminded us of the cyclical nature of student interests. One review was titled "From Apathy to Revolt and Back to Apathy" (Lipset, 1974) Another noted that "In a few years, I have seen students go from a concern with revolutionary politics to taking drugs, to getting into graduate and professional school." These were not different generations of students, but rather the same students at different times in their lives. (Hendin, 1975,p. 24)

But a new and very different generation of students enters college in the 1970s, and this quiet generation is destined to make more change in higher education than all of the noise of the student protest generation. It is in the Gallery of Open Admissions that we find strong and effective, albeit perhaps unintended, pressures for reform.

Gallery of Open Admissions

The Gallery of Open Admissions couldn't be more different from the Gallery of Student Protest. The scenes shift from university campuses with their architecturally distinctive buildings and green, well-tended lawns to urban colleges, commuting students, and run-down buildings in the midst of crowded cities. If Berkeley was the poster campus of the 1960s, City University of New York (CUNY) was the poster campus of the 1970s.

I have spent considerable time in this gallery. Indeed, some of my own portraits of students hang here. Next to my portrait entitled *The New Learners* is one of those small printed museum signs attempting to explain the picture and why it is displayed in this gallery. Some 30 years ago, I pictured the issue for higher education as follows:

> What is quality higher education? There was a time when people thought they knew. It was typified by bright students, a faculty distinguished in research and writing, and affluent and successful alumni.

> To attain such heights, a college selects students of known academic accomplishments, recruits faculty with big names and proven records, and assures itself of successful alumni through placing its sought-after seal of approval on its graduates. Somewhere between entrance and graduation, it is assumed that students gain a 'quality' education. But all we know for sure is that the best way to graduate a bright class is to admit a bright class.
>
> Up until now, higher education has been a low-risk venture. You get out about what you put in. So sure are people of this formula that most research and careful application of the findings reside in the admissions office -- not in the classroom. Probably the closest thing to science in the practice of education lies in predicting the winners -- and losers -- of the academic race. (Cross, 1973, p. 31)

Robert Marshak was the eighth president of City University of New York when open admissions was mandated by the Board of Higher Education in 1970. In a diptych, descriptively entitled *Open Access, Open Admissions, and Open Warfare,* (1981; 1982) he paints a vivid picture of how an urban university moved almost overnight from rigorously selective admissions to open admissions.

The Gallery of Open Admissions contains two distinctive types of portraits. Symbolically, they face off against each other, faculty portraits hanging on one wall, faced by student portraits opposite. Students are pictured as anxious, insecure, eager to make it academically, but lacking even the most rudimentary skills for doing so. Edward Quinn, Chairman of the English Department at City College, declared that the one thing that open admissions students had in common was that "most of them have not been particularly successful people. They lack the social ease of those whose parents went to college, the confidence of those who have always been near the top of their class, and in many cases the elementary sense of feeling at home here --"here" being not only at the City University of New York but the United States of America." (1973, p. 30)

Remember that it was not poverty or race or social disadvantagement per se that was purportedly the issue in open admissions; rather it was poor academic

performance as it was taught and measured in the public schools. The burning question, stated in its most inflammatory phrasing, was Should students who can't do college-level work be admitted to the university? CUNY had been proudly admitting financially poor but ambitious and academically accomplished immigrant students to a tuition-free college education for 125 years, so access for first-generation students was not the issue.

A sudden change in mission was understandably upsetting to a faculty used to teaching students selected for their past accomplishments in school learning. President Marshak observed that, the faculty "were driven into opposition to open admissions when it confronted them with a life crisis" to teach types of students that they had never been prepared to teach". Professor Theodore Gross painted a dramatic portrait of a faculty facing open admissions in an article in Saturday Review entitled, *How to Kill a College*. "What really gnawed away at our innards and left us hollow," he wrote, "what coursed in our bodies like an incurable illness was our growing realization and fear that in middle age we no longer had a profession." (1978)

There were, however, professors who found a new and enhanced profession in teaching open admissions students. Mina Shaughnessy was a remarkable professor who taught remedial English at CUNY. In her classic book, *Errors and Expectations*, she showed that under the messy surface of the writing of students who had little experience with written expression, there was coherence and meaning. Other faculty too discovered that teaching students who really needed good teachers could be the most rewarding career of all.

Walking through the Gallery of Open Admissions today is a strange experience, raising questions both historical and contemporary. If early pictures of confrontation and hostility are sometimes hard to understand from today's perspective, certain themes are contemporary and continue to resurface in modern times. Open admissions is now accepted as national policy; in fact the majority of college students in this country attend open admissions colleges. Some, admittedly, are not prepared to do college-level work, and the old debate resurfaces. Do colleges, as educational

institutions, have an obligation to prepare students for college-level work or should they wait until students are prepared before admitting them? What should colleges expect of students, and what should students expect of colleges?.

In the end, the obligations of higher education to the new learners was defined more by establishing new kinds of colleges with new missions than by changing established institutions. Ultimately, it was the mere presence of the new learners in col'ege classrooms that presented faculty with that most profound of professional challenges -- known today as "producing learning."

The Gallery of Diversity

In contrast to the Gallery of Open Admissions, which contains mostly the portraits of white students, the Gallery of Diversity contains the portraits of students of color. This gallery, however, is clearly unfinished. On one wall hangs a huge collage consisting of what critic Arthur Levine calls, "swirling rhetoric, confusion, and the lack of common understanding about the meaning of diversity." (1991, p. 4) In many ways, reactions to this gallery are similar to reactions to galleries of modern art, which represent to many a strange and poorly understood culture.

Perhaps this explains, in part, the unusually large proportion of articles, written not by traditional academic authorities, but rather by students of color. These students and former students painted troubled pictures, not so much about access to college, (they had, after all, been admitted and wrote well enough to be published in Change). Rather their concern was with the alien environment they found on their campuses. Horace Porter, in an article entitled, *Reflections of a Black Son*, (1977, p. 36) felt that "Amherst was like a foreign country those first few months. . . Everyone, or so it appeared, discussed books that I had not read. No one discussed the books that I had read." (p. 36). Bartley McSwine was more bitter; he discovered that his "sojourn at the white university began in relative tranquillity but gradually escalated toward an inner crisis. My quest began for an identity . . that would enable me as a student who happened to be black to exist to thrive and survive in an alien

white society. I was soon to discover that this quest was one that most white professors were not prepared or willing to help me carry out. . .they displayed a gross lack of knowledge of the black experience." (1971, p. 30.)

Edward Fiske, who was education editor of the New York Times, picked up the theme in a portrait of the Hispanic experience. He wrote, "For many Hispanic students the most serious problems are not those they confront getting into college but those they face once they get there. The problems range from the anxiety of breaking close family ties to the loneliness and tensions inherent in finding their way in institutions built around an alien culture." (1985, p. 29).

I think it is fair to say that the "alien culture" theme is sounded in one way or another in virtually all of the articles by or about students of color published by Change during this period of wrenching adjustment for both students and colleges. Unfortunately, and I suppose not surprisingly, the second most prevalent theme was the lack of trust that these students had in their colleges. Paula Giddings says flat out that "I realize that I avoided educational institutions because I didn't trust them. In the '60s, when the crunch came, when the necessity arose for them to come clean on the issue of race, they proved themselves unworthy. I lost faith in them." (1990, p. 14). In somewhat more measured tones, Porter says that "the fact that the faculty and administration approached Afro-American and black studies with the same reserve and circumspection they brought to all important matters, shook my confidence in the scholarly process." (1977, p. 36)

Frankly, I come away from this gallery depressed. The portraits are, on the whole, dark and angry. But against this dark background there are bright spots -- here and there a tribute to a brilliant lecture, a gifted teacher, a special friend. Porter shows how much difference a single faculty member can make. He pays tribute to his advisor at Amherst in these words. "[He] became my friend and my guide to clear thinking. He suggested works by black writers of whom I had no knowledge. He taught me how to read novels critically. He was never too busy or too indifferent to read assorted essays that I stuck in his mailbox. He made no secret of the fact that he

disagreed with my politics, but on many occasions he invited me home for dinner." (1977, p. 38-9)

As we saw in the Gallery of Open Admissions, colleges struggled to adapt to new and unfamiliar missions. Many faculty members, strong advocates of the educational value of student diversity, introduced open discussion of racial issues into their classrooms. But to their dismay and disappointment, they sometimes discovered that their purpose to teach openness, critical thinking, and thoughtful response was not one that was universally understood by students. A study conducted at Grinnell College reported that a major reason that students gave for wanting to discuss diversity was to convince others of their viewpoint. Interviewers at Grinnell College found the opportunity for advocacy to be a frequently perceived value of discussion -- as shown in these quotes from student responses: "I want to discuss affirmative action because I want to educate people." or more blatantly, "in order to make the other person realize that what they said was wrong" (Trosset, 1998, p. 46). Some students gave "reaching consensus" as the goal of discussion -- as in "Ideally, people should talk in order to mold all opinions together in a compromise." or "The best thing is when opposing views find some point of agreement." (p. 46). Radical relativism -- the notion that all ideas are equally valid -- was prevalent among student responses, as was the "fear of disagreeing with anyone for fear of intimidating or offending them." (p. 49).

Beauty, we are told, is in the eye of the beholder, and what students see is often very different from what faculty are trying to illustrate. There were a few -- as in very few -- articles about diversity that sought greater understanding. Frank Wong, a college administrator, deeply troubled about why his discussions with a respected black faculty member were " like a duel in the dark: the thrust and parry of our arguments seemed to go past each other-- we stabbed thin air, our mutual anger mounted, the misengagement was complete.. . Gradually" he wrote, "I've come to this uncomfortable conclusion: Those of us who advocate cultural diversity too often have the wrong end of the argument when it comes to the issue of forming community,

while those who've been skeptical of cultural diversity in the name of defending a traditional academic community have the right end of the argument but have argued it wrongly." (Wong, 1991, p. 50) He concludes with this thought: "The very term 'multicultural community' may be an oxymoron; 'many cultures' is likely to mean many communities" (p. 51) But a community, he says, needs a shared sense of purpose. "It is not a multicuiltural community that we seek; it is an *intercultural community*, where different groups engage each other with united purpose." (p. 53).

Gallery of Lifelong Learning

Next on our tour is The Gallery of Lifelong Learning. It contains some quite diverse views of higher education in the 1980's. First on the scene are the dreary, scary pictures of the predicted decline of college enrollments due to the looming demographic crisis of a declining 18-year old population. This doomsday style was so prevalent in the late 1970's that a study by the American Council on Education (Frances, 1980), painting a relatively rosy picture of future enrollments came in for sharp criticism by Fred Crossland of the Ford Foundation (1980). He wrote that "the report's optimism is unwarranted and unsubstantiated by known trend lines. I fear it may actually be counterproductive by shielding administrators from reality and delaying sensible planning . . ."

Rather than heeding Crossland's advice for "sensible planning," however, higher education went all out, enthusiastically designing creative and innovative programs and marketing them without seemly academic restraint. Indeed, John Sawhill, President of New York University, saw fit to complain that,

> "Higher education is approaching the territory of lifelong learning with standards, forethought, and sense of dignity of the California Gold Rush. . .the adult population looks like the last frontier for educators, and institutions are eager to stake their claims. This drive for the high noon of the life cycle has brought some new vigor to our colleges and universities, but the competition for students has also produced a cornucopia of dubious offerings." (p. 7).

Benjamin DeMott was an equally sour critic. In an article entitled, *The Thrills and Shills of Lifelong Learning*, he reviewed a number of the popular guides to adult opportunities, concluding the "unremitting hucksterism" of the new advocates of lifelong learning was downright painful.

Even the critics, however, conceded that the necessity to seek out new markets for higher education had stimulated an era of exceptional creativity and flexibility. In 1982, Change published a special edition depicting five *Alternatives to Decline*, to show how various universities and community-wide consortia were successfully averting the demographic crisis.

The Kellogg Foundation spearheaded many of the innovations in lifelong learning after an intensive self-study. To establish their future directions and priorities, they identified three "conceptual adjustments" that they wished to encourage: 1) Full acceptance of lifelong learning as the frame within which both individuals and institutions must behave. 2) Self-directedness by the individual learner to build personal responsibility and move us past the obsolete teacher-centered pedagogy that still dominates our schools and colleges. 3) Expansion of the scope of explicit and intentional learning to all of the learnings required for effective economic participation, for effective citizenship, and for productive personal lives. (Elser, 1982).

Credit for life experience, credit by examination, distance learning, cooperative programs with business, flexible scheduling -- even increased day-care and parking facilities became accepted alternatives to the widely-feared retrenchment. In fact, the creative efforts to making a college education more accessible and more attractive to adults resulted in a 14 percent increase in college enrollments between 1980 and 1990, rather than the 26 percent decline that had been widely predicted. .

Gallery of "Student as Consumer"

Finally, we come to the Gallery of Student as Consumer. The portraits in this gallery are a mixed bag. They were mostly painted in the 1990s, but seem to grow out

of some combination of the pragmatic vocationalism of the new learners, general disillusionment with social activism, and the decline of the campus as a focus of student life. Academic traditionalists don't much like the pictures they see in this gallery. In one popular phaseology of the day, they see students obsessed with preparing to make a living, where they would prefer to see students preparing to make a life (Swenson, 1998). They see grisly pictures of the death of the liberal arts, an obituary of collegiate life, (Levine & Cureton, 1998), and snapshots of materialistic students pursuing practical career training. Gurus in this gallery are Peter Drucker and William Bennett who are variously admired or reviled. Drucker opines that the failure of institutions to respond to market forces will result in their demise. And William Bennett , Secretary of Education in the 1980s, gained a measure of fame or infamy when he remarked in a speech that if his son came to him and said, "'You promised to pay for my tuition at Harvard; how about giving me $50,000 instead to start a little business?' I might think it was a good idea." says Bennett. (Krukowski, 1985) p. 22 (Maybe in 2010, we will have apocryphal tales of college drop-outs asking their parents for a place in the garage to raise their own $50,000.)

If there is a central theme in the portraits of this gallery, it is of student as consumer -- and a demanding one, at that. Arthur Levine's computer-generated picture derived from surveys of student attitudes toward their education looks like this:

> "Higher education is not the central feature of their lives, but just one of a multiplicity of activities in which they are engaged every day. For many, college is not even the most important of these activities. Work and family often overshadow it.
>
> The relationship these students want with their college is like the one they already have with their banks, supermarkets, and other organizations they patronize. They want education to be nearby and to operate during convenient hours. . .They want easy, accessible parking, short lines, and polite and efficient personnel and services. They also want high-quality products but are eager for

> low costs. They are very willing to comparison shop -- placing a premium on time and money. (Levine, 1993, p. 4)

Ted Marchese, editor of Change, paints a similar picture in an editorial, observing that the students of the '90s are frequently portrayed as "consumerist, uncivil, demanding, preoccupied with work, and as caring more for GPAs and degrees than the life of the mind." (1998, p. 4). He quotes from the unflattering portrait painted in the Washington Post. by a political scientist who returned to teaching after a lengthy absence. "What do students now expect?" she asked. "Written summaries of lectures; course packets in place of trips to the library; the syllabus as 'iron-clad contract' with no allowance for adaptation or detour; right-answer exams, amply presaged; and grades of A and B only." (quoted in Marchese, 1998, p. 4).

Many academics neither like nor understand the portraits of the students in this gallery. In an article entitled *Customers: The Cuss Words of Academe*, the author claims that the very idea of "responding to the market place" and treating "students as customers" raises the hair on the back of professorial necks." (Swenson, 1998, p. 34). Authors representing the school of stark realism, counter by warning that if higher education is unwilling or unable to meet the demands of the market place then other providers will rise in their place. Jan Krukowski, president of a market research firm, contends --sweepingly, as may be the inclination of market research firms -- that "everyone wants practical, material benefits from college. This focus is unmistakably evident in students' choices of colleges and in their expressed interest in academic fields, and in parents' attitudes about their children's college choices. " (1985, p. 22).

So, higher education seems forced to respond to a student generation that seems to neither understand nor to appreciate traditional academic values. And, once again, the academic community seems deeply divided on how to respond. To what extent should students change -- or be changed -- to meet the expectations of colleges and to what extent should colleges change -- or be changed -- to meet the expectations of students?

A Personal Reflection

Usually, the docent ends the tour at the last gallery, hustling people toward the exit without attempting to summarize what viewers have seen or felt. But I will risk a brief personal reflection.

One does not come away from this exhibit without reflecting on the challenge of change. As one who has been professionally involved in each of the eras depicted in this set of articles about students, I confess that I was surprised by the adversarial tone of much of the writing of the time. In almost every era, there is--initially at least--resistance to the change proposed and/or needed by students.

At the same time, I come away from this retrospective greatly impressed with how rapidly a huge, hard-to-steer, conglomeration of diverse institutions has responded to the needs of changing student populations. Collectively and individually, colleges and universities are very different from what they were 30 years ago. Anchoring the extremes of this 30-year continuum of change are the student protest movement, which resulted in relatively little change, and the lifelong learning movement, which resulted in relatively great change. In between are the eras of open admissions, diversity, and consumerism, which to some extent may be considered works still in process.

Baldly stated, here are three premises that seem to thread their way through the galleries on this tour:

1. Broad public support is essential for change..
2. Pressure or threat from sources outside of higher education is helpful, and is probably necessary.
3. Money is helpful, but probably not always necessary.

As a conclusion, let me try to marshal the evidence for these premises:

The highly visible student protest movement never really gained broad social support. Many people took a dim view of non-negotiable demands. Moreover, demands tend to be about small changes that can be implemented quickly to serve as

temporary compliance.. Such surface changes often fail to develop the connections with the practices and traditions of education that make for deep and lasting change.

In contrast to the student protest movement, lifelong learning had broad social support. But it had something else going for it. It was accomplished in a time of serious distress within higher education. It was the alternative to the threat of decline and retrenchment, and was welcomed by educators who had a personal stake in the recruitment of large numbers of adult part-time learners to replace the dwindling supply of 18- year olds. It serves as an example of extraordinary creativity and experimentation in a time of scarce resources. "Where there's a will, there's a way" seems to apply in this era. I hasten to say, however, that in the future, when forces such as technology may form the primary levers for change, resources will undoubtedly play a more crucial role.

The change involved in meeting the demands of students as consumers has much in common with the lifelong learning movement. It too has broad social support; it is about meeting students desires for access, convenience, and relevance. But it occurs in a period of affluence and relative comfort with student enrollments. The threat from without in this case is not declining enrollments but rising competition. If students cannot get what they want from higher education, then there are other places to go, especially since the lifelong learning movement generally weakened higher education's monopoly on credits and credentials.

Open admissions had broad public support, but not much enthusiasm within academe. It was accomplished more through the creation of community colleges, designed and dedicated to a new mission, than through change in existing structures and people. Questions are resurfacing today about the role of remedial education in higher education, giving rise to the observation that the changes required for open admissions were never accepted in any depth by traditional institutions. Connections were not made in any lasting way with existing practices. It is also important to remember that the rise of community colleges took the pressure off of four-year colleges in an era of prosperity when resources could be marshaled for the huge

building project of establishing a new community college somewhere in this nation at the rate of one new college each week throughout the early '70s.

The change required to make diversity a deep rather than a surface phenomenon is a work still in progress. I think that the notion of fairness and equal educational opportunity is given broad support by the general public. Affirmative action, however, is far more strongly supported within academe than without--hence all of the current political thrashing around to find some alternative to affirmative action that would be supported by the general public. But as we saw clearly in the reactions of students of color to their education, the surface changes that are often bragged about by institutions achieving numerically high ratios of students of color, have a long way to go to achieve the depth of change that is required to accomplish an education of quality for all students.

Finally, the student-as-consumer movement is on a greased track. It has all of the necessary ingredients to maintain its momentum -- broad public support, external pressure in the form of aggressive competition, enthusiastic support from employers, and the resources of high national prosperity to deliver almost any kind of education almost anywhere.

This ends our tour. Change in higher education is more a work of art than a work of science, and I hope you will depart with your own interpretations of the tour that I have tried to present this morning.

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